The Weston A. Price Foundation

Children's Health Introduction

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Between 1984-1991, our science editor Mary Enig served as an expert witness in several suits involving two brands of chloride-deficient soy formula, Neo-Mul-Soy and CHOFree, produced by a company called Syntex. The plaintiffs argued that by removing chloride (in the form of sodium chloride) from the formula, their children did not achieve their full intellectual potential. Mary testified that chloride was essential for the growth and development of the brain. Syntex went out of the infant formula business because of adverse publicity about their products.

A news article appearing after the trial quoted a juror who worked for a pet food company. "There is more quality control for pet food," she said, "than for infant formula."

At no time is quality control more important than during infancy, when the body is built, the endocrine system activated, and the brain and nervous system being formed. Yet our medical system assures us that the diet of a nursing mother does not affect the quality of her milk, and the formula makers warn us that only they can put a sanitary and scientific formula together for our babies.

Most practitioners are horrified at the thought of mothers making formula for their babies, citing the possibility of mistakes and contamination. But any mother who cares enough to make a whole foods baby formula will do so with far more care than the most reputable formula maker. Today's cost-cutting measures and black market in formula put babies more at risk than ever.

There is no better example of the callousness of the formula industry than their promotion of soy-based formula, which is totally unsuitable for babies. In fact, during the Neo-Mul-Soy case, the defendants insisted that the Neo-Mul-Soy-fed babies be compared only with other soy-fed babies. They knew that a comparison with babies fed milk-based formula would make the whole soy product line look bad.

In the aftermath of the tragedy of September 11, Americans are reexamining their values. What better place to start than to take a clear-eyed look at the way we feed our young. Perhaps our new sensibilities will help parents realize that unhealthy foods and the desire for convenience place a terrible burden of poor health on the next generation. If we are to make the world a better place in which to live, we will need a generation of healthy, clear-thinking individuals. This can only be accomplished by quality control in our diets from the very beginning—before conception, during pregnancy, while breastfeeding and in the food choices we make for our children as they mature and grow.

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